TO THE PUBLIC.

[184-2]

THE novel situation in which I have been recently placed, viz., that of a culprit at the Bar of the Weekly Sessions, appears to me to call for some remark in order that I may vindicate my conduct from the reproaches of my fellow citizens, and satisfy the public, that I am not so much in the wrong as might be inferred from the harsh proceedings of our City Council. I allude to my conviction for the new crime of continuing the door steps to some of my houses, which have had them for a hundred years and more. In relation to this subject I beg to state that the Magistrates of the city, so far back as the year 1796, decided on making alterations respecting cellar doors, proposing to make them twenty inches: this measure tended to encroach on individual property, in consequence of which I waited on the gentlemen then representing the city, viz., Messrs. Panet and Grant for the Upper Town, and Messrs. Young and Leicester for the Lower Town, upon my submitting the case to the consideration of those gentlemen, and after giving it their attention, Mr. Grant said, (addressing himself to his brother representative, Mr. Young,) "Brother did you understand by the law that citizens' property was to be ruined and they lose the use of their cellars?" Mr. Young emphatically answered *No*, Mr. Grant again remarked, neither did I, the law only means to give as much convenience to the public as can be done with propriety, and with as little detriment to private property as may be, and should an unusual case arise, to let it be decided by arbitration, and the proprietor indemnified, and if refused, to let the public endure the inconvenience, and in pursuance of this opinion they issued instructions to the Magistrates not to sue the people until the workmen came up to the doors with the paving." This opinion, from the language of Messrs. Grant and Young, I am ready to testify upon oath in any Court of Justice if required, upon my hopes of salvation from God, before whose judgment seat, in all likelihood, I must soon make my appearance.

During last fall and this spring I have removed forty steps from various houses of my property, and whilst my operatives were at work this spring, I was summoned for neglecting and refusing to remove them, as if it were in my power to do the whole work at once and without delay.

I have paid my assessment money for the year, amounting to £105 0s. 11½d., and have contributed from the commencement to the present time, a sum not less than £2,500, and did so with all cheerfulness, as being so necessary for the improvement of the city.

The large house occupied by Vanovous, in the upper Town Market, paid only 25s., per annum assessment money up to the year 1822, but upon my expending thereon £1,800, the assessment came to £5 and £5 10s., per annum, for which act I now stand condemned—the cellars alone cost me £600 for improving them, and it is not yet three years since I paid £25 Road cess for sinking the channel to render the cellars more useful.

I own now about six houses, the steps of which cannot possibly be removed without a deterioration of more than half the value of some, and of the remainder I might as well pull them down entirely, and I am positive that £5,000 would not make good the damages; I believe others have houses in a like position.

Query? I desire to know from what source does the Corporation derive its power to compel a man to deteriorate, injure, or ruin his property?

I beg to invite any person to look at the alterations made to the house No. 18, St. Stanislas street, caused by the removal of the door steps, and I will ask them is not the deep recess or porch there, suited for foot pads and others of vicious characters to lurk in and issue from it to way lay passengers even in noon day. I have asked many well informed gentlemen if such lurking holes would be allowed in the cities of Great Britain, and they all answered "certainly not."

Query? Which is it better for the proprietors or tenants of houses to run the hazard of getting their necks broken inside or outside? for the so called improvements proposed involve this alternative in many cases.

I have removed all the steps that it was practicable to do without involving deep and serious loss, and have expended at least £150 in keeping up plank foot walks, and in many cases have paid license money as well as assessment money.

I am now going on fifty-nine years a resident in Quebec, and I call upon the inhabitants thereof whether I have at any time been a disturber of order, regularity or tranquillity, or whether I have been a tyrant over my tenants, it is true, I might have thrown one hundred families in St. Rock's yearly into the streets, and thus reduce them to beggary, but I have not done so, I might have done the same by as many more in two Seigniories in the country—these I allow are poor times for oppression, but I never oppressed in either good or bad times, but thank God, was always averse to such measures.

When I purchased St. Rock's there were then due from £1,100 to £1,200, for which I paid cash on sight, and I assert with all due humility, that I bestowed from £1000 to £1,200 in charity yearly for the last ten or twelve years in this city. St. Rock's owes me at this time from £5,000 to £6,000, the interest of which would amount to a very handsome sum, and certain other large sums in the Seigniories—add to this the many annual losses of house rents in the Upper Town.

Further, in the Insurrection of 1837 the Magistracy found it necessary to establish a City Watch, and in their *wisdom* proposed the Engine House at the Gaol for a Watch House; Mr. Robt. Symes communicated this to me, upon which I laughed, and to obviate the rheumatisms, &c., that would afflict (certainly) many of the gentlemen from sitting therein, I presented them with the free use for two years of the first flat of the house No. 18, St. Stanislas street, which they accordingly occupied for two winters, the cellar of this property rented for £24 per annum, but now since the *improvements* have been effected it is fit only for a coal hole and yields nothing.

Another instance of the harsh treatment I have received from the Corporation, is to be found in the manner in which they compelled me to lease them a property at less than half its value, the property in question adjoins Finlay Market, and previous to their taking possession of it, yielded £60 to £70 a-year. The Council called upon me and informed me they would give me £30 a-year for it, and that if I refused they would build up against my doors aud windows and shut me out from the public Market, and in accordance with their threat, called for tenders to erect the threatened building. Under these circumstances the public will not be surprized that rather than enter into a law suit at my time of life I yielded and made the sacrifice required, equal at least to £30 a-year, independent of the extra insurance to which I am subjected from the wooden buildings the Corporation have erected thereon. All this leaves me little or nothing out of the rent of my property.

It being my intention to support my just rights over my property in every constituted Court, and if necessary before the Governor in Council and the Legislature of the Province, I make known my intention in order that those citizens who have withstood the encroachments made by the Corporation under colour of their authority, may if they see fit pursue similar steps to those I am taking in defending themselves from such unprecedented aggression.

Signed, **GEORGE POZER.**

TO THE PUBLIC.

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Another instance of the harsh treatment I have received from the Corporation, is to be found in the manner in which they compelled me to lease them a property at less than half its value, the property in question adjoins Friday Market, and previous to their taking possession of it, yielded £60 to £70 a-year. The Council called upon me and informed me they would give me £30 a-year for it, and that if I refused they would build up against my doors and windows and shut me out from the public Market, and in accordance with their threat, called for tenders to erect the threatened building. Under these circumstances the public will not be surprised that rather than enter into a law suit at my time of life I yielded and made the sacrifice required, equal at least to £30 a-year, independent of the extra insurance to which I am subjected from the wooden buildings the Corporation have erected thereon. All this leaves me little or nothing out of the rent of my property.

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